



Daily News Bulletin

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84th Year

TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel gives Arafat more time

Israel decided to give Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat at least another 48 hours to fulfil the terms of a cease-fire he reached last week with Foreign Minister Shimon Peres.

The Inner Cabinet also decided Sunday to lift a blockade of the West Bank city of Jericho and open the border crossing at Rafah between Egypt and the Gaza Strip.

17 Palestinians die in violence

Israeli troops clashed with Palestinian gunmen and rock-throwers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip for a fourth day in a row.

During Sunday's clashes at least two Palestinians were killed, leaving at least 17 Palestinians killed since the two sides agreed last week to bolster a cease-fire.

Israel said the victims were involved in attacks on its soldiers that occurred as Palestinian marked the first anniversary of the ongoing Palestinian uprising.

Babi Yar massacre marked

Ukrainian leaders attended a ceremony commemorating the thousands of people massacred by Nazi troops at Babi Yar.

President Leonid Kuchma was among the government officials at Sunday's ceremony, during which the cornerstone for a Jewish heritage center sponsored by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee was unveiled. [Page 4]

Reuters: Limit use of 'terrorist'

Reuters news agency has asked journalists to refrain from using the terms "terrorist" or "freedom fighter," except in cases of direct quotations, when describing the events surrounding the Sept. 11 attacks.

"We do not characterize the subjects of news stories but instead report their actions, identity and background," the company said in a written statement, adding that the guidelines are important for the safety of reporters in dangerous areas around the world.

Because of Sukkot, the JTA DAILY NEWS BULLETIN will not be published Wednesday, Oct. 3 or Thursday, Oct. 4.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES

Year of Israeli-Palestinian violence produced no victory for either side

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM (JTA) — One year after the start of the second Palestinian uprising against Israel, relations between the two sides cannot be much worse.

Despite Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat's repeated renunciations of terrorism — even as far back as 1988, at the height of the first uprising — Palestinian acts of terror have become almost a daily fact of life for Israelis.

In response to those attacks, Israel last week took the first step toward the creation of a buffer zone between it and the West Bank.

This came exactly eight years to the month after then-Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Arafat shook hands on the White House lawn and embarked on a peace process in which there was supposed to be no need for buffer zones.

Now, in the absence of a negotiated settlement between the two parties, Israel is embarking on a course toward unilateral separation from the Palestinians.

When the Israeli army set up a closed military zone in the northern West Bank last week, Israeli officials said the 20-mile-long buffer was meant to stop suicide bombers from infiltrating into Israel.

Arafat led the chorus of protests from Palestinian officials, calling the move a "serious escalation."

According to the rationale behind the Oslo peace process, the two sides would adopt a series of confidence-building measures that would ultimately lead to a full peace accord.

But after the past year of violence — a year filled also with a virtually unending series of accusations and counter-charges — the two erstwhile peace partners now have virtually no confidence in the other.

Even the most diehard Israeli doves no longer believe that reconciliation between the two peoples is possible in the foreseeable future.

Shlomo Ben-Ami, a peace negotiator who also served as foreign minister in the government of Ehud Barak, recently told the Israeli daily Ha'aretz that Arafat is too much a captive to his own image as a freedom fighter to take the necessary steps for reaching a historic compromise with Israel.

The Palestinians, for their part, are just as suspicious of Israelis.

Their belief that Israel wants to perpetuate its occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and retain all its settlements there provided the fuel that ignited the latest intifada — and kept it aflame throughout the past year.

"The more settlements established on occupied territory, the more land is needed to provide 'security.' There then can never be, under this logic, any withdrawal or trading land for peace," said Arjan el Fassed, an editor of the pro-Palestinian Electronic Intifada Web site.

For their part, Israelis currently see little reason to trade land for peace — a move, as they see it, that will only provide the Palestinians with more territory from which to launch attacks on Israel.

As the deadlock continues, and the death toll mounts, which side is doing better? Not the Palestinians.

A year after the outbreak of their intifada, they have scored neither territorial nor political gains.

They have more than 600 dead and thousands wounded.

The Israel Defense Force encircles their cities and villages, and blocks their major

MIDEAST FOCUS

Sides play blame game

Israeli and Palestinian officials traded blame for the violence that threatens to undo a truce reached last week. Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat said Sunday that Israel was guilty of a "deliberate escalation."

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's spokesman, Ra'an-an Gissin, said Arafat was taking "no real action" to enforce the cease-fire. The Israeli army says Palestinians have carried out more than 100 attacks since the truce was reached. Last Friday, Israeli and Palestinian officials held their first security cooperation talks in months.

Abdullah wants U.S. involvement

King Abdullah of Jordan urged President Bush to take stronger action to calm the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The king, who met Sept. 27 with top U.S. officials, also pledged support for the U.S. campaign against terrorism. During the visit, Bush signed a law implementing a U.S.-Jordanian free trade area.

Radical groups bash cease-fire

Radical Palestinian groups meeting in Syria called attempts to bolster an Israeli-Palestinian cease-fire a waste of time. The Palestinian "uprising will continue and get stronger," said Ahmed Jibril, secretary-general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command.

Trees planted for U.S. victims

Eighteen trees were planted in a memorial forest outside Jerusalem for victims of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Some 300 schoolchildren, Israel's Ashkenazic chief rabbi and Jewish National Fund officials took part in the ceremony — the first planting since the end of the shmita, or sabbatical year, when trees are not planted in Israel.



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traffic arteries. Car travel from Nablus to Hebron, a distance of some 50 miles, now takes some six hours by roundabout routes.

Unemployment is currently at an all-time high, and the standard of living at an all-time low.

Hotels have shut down. Places like Bethlehem that used to thrive on tourism are empty.

As Islamic militants have stepped up their terrorist operations, many Palestinian Christians have emigrated to countries like Australia and Peru.

Israelis, however, are not faring much better.

Some 171 Israelis have been killed.

There have been nearly daily drive-by shootings on West Bank roads that were once relatively safe.

A series of ruthless terrorist attacks within Israel have created widespread feelings of anxiety and uncertainty.

Israelis have to undergo security checks almost everywhere they go — at supermarkets, buses, schools, cinemas.

The economy is facing its worst slowdown in more than 30 years, with unemployment at close to 10 percent.

True, the slowdown began before the intifada. It was arguably precipitated by last year's Nasdaq stock crash, but the subsequent start of Palestinian violence made the situation worse.

Foreign investors began shying away from the Israeli markets, and the tourism industry has all but collapsed.

National resources are once again directed more at security than in developing a sound infrastructure.

Perhaps most menacing of all is the fragile relationship between the Jewish majority and the Arab minority within Israel.

Riots last October in which 13 Israeli Arabs were killed during clashes with police have increased feelings of alienation among Israel's Arabs — feelings that have simmered for decades.

Just the same, despite their best attempts, the Palestinians have failed to break the spirit of Israelis. Pro-Palestinian leftist groups in Israel have been pushed to the political margins. Israelis gave Prime Minister Ariel Sharon an overwhelming majority in the elections held earlier this year.

While a majority of Israelis are willing to make territorial compromises if the political situation ever improves, a vast majority supports Sharon's policy of "not negotiating under fire."

In an indication of how much the Palestinian uprising has hardened Israeli attitudes, recent public opinion polls show that some 80 percent of Israelis oppose a meeting between Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Arafat.

But the very fact that both sides have lost so much during the past year may ultimately pave the way toward a resumption of peace negotiations.

Indeed, Peres and Arafat met last week — after events on the ground remained relatively peaceful. True, U.S. officials had been pressing for the meeting, which Sharon had called off three times before, citing continued Palestinian attacks on Israelis.

Washington believes that quelling Israeli-Palestinian violence is essential to its efforts to gain support in the Arab world for its coalition against global terrorism following the Sept. 11 terror attacks against the United States.

For his part, Arafat wants to become a respected member of the coalition.

To achieve this goal, he appears willing to clamp down on anti-Israel terror — at least for now.

Whatever Arafat's true intentions are, Israeli officials are complaining that the Palestinian Authority is refusing to arrest terrorists as part of a cease-fire agreed upon last week by the two sides.

Palestinian officials deny they had been asked or had agreed to make such arrests. The officials say they will not arrest people at Israel's request, only those who violate Arafat's cease-fire orders.

Few Israelis delude themselves that Arafat has any interest in outlawing the terrorist groups operating from the West Bank and Gaza.

Sooner or later, many Israelis believe, Arafat will try to convince the world that there are no terrorists in the Holy Land — only freedom fighters. □

JEWISH WORLD

Accused rabbi claims innocence

The Orthodox Union youth professional who resigned in July 2000 amid allegations that he sexually abused scores of teen-agers is claiming that separate charges that he abused two girls at a Jewish day school are fabricated.

If convicted, Rabbi Baruch Lanner, whose case is being tried in a New Jersey court, faces up to 40 years in prison for molesting two former students at Hillel Yeshiva High School.

Ad praises terror response

The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations ran a full-page advertisement in major newspapers honoring the work of President Bush, New York Gov. George Pataki and New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

The ad quotes Deuteronomy, and reads "Chazak V'Amatz," translated as, "Be strong and of good courage."

WTC developer praises 'family'

The real estate developer who held the lease on the World Trade Center praised the Jewish communal "family" for coming together in the days following the Sept. 11 terror attacks.

Larry Silverstein, a major philanthropist and past chairman of UJA-Federation of Greater New York, speaking at a federation campaign luncheon, praised local Jewish agencies like the Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services, which provided counseling to his employees in the wake of the tragedy.

Several Silverstein Properties employees are still listed as missing.

Bush nominates envoy on religion

John Hanford was nominated by President Bush to serve as ambassador-at-large for international religious freedom.

Hanford has been a longtime advocate of international religious freedom, serving in the office of Sen. Richard Lugar (R-Ind.).

Store serves as Sukkot depot

The Arlington-Fairfax Jewish Congregation paired up with its local Home Depot in Arlington, Va., for a class on how to build a sukkah.

While the national home improvement chain typically does not partner with religious groups and is not running any kind of organized program, stores across the country have done this periodically, a Home Depot spokesperson said.

After the class, participants could purchase the materials needed to build their own sukkot for the holiday, which begins Monday night.

Growing tensions with Afghanistan threatening Jewish group's programs

By Julie Wiener

NEW YORK (JTA) — Like many other charitable groups, the American Jewish World Service is collecting money to benefit the victims of the devastating Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon.

But in addition to helping those hurt by terrorism, the New York-based humanitarian group has faced another concern in recent weeks: fear that heightened tensions with Afghanistan will threaten people the AJWS helps in the impoverished country.

Since 1999, the AJWS has been one of a handful of American groups funding more than 30 secret schools for girls and women in Afghanistan. The Taliban prohibits girls from attending school and does not allow women to work.

The AJWS — which supports anti-poverty and community support projects in developing nations — is believed to be the only Jewish organization that funds projects in Afghanistan, a country controlled by the fundamentalist Islamic Taliban regime since 1996.

Ruth Messinger, the group's president, said that in a U.S. war in Afghanistan, "the worst victims would be the people who we are helping, who are already victims of the Taliban."

The women who teach in the underground schools do so at great personal risk, potentially subject to the death penalty if caught. They teach in private homes and assign girls different times to enter and leave so as not to draw attention.

Because of the longtime dangers of working in Afghanistan, the AJWS has never sent its own volunteers or staff there, although it does in most countries it assists. Instead, it works through a Western human rights organization whose identity cannot be disclosed for fear of repercussions from the Taliban.

The AJWS contributes approximately \$100,000 a year for the schools, which serve over 1,000 girls. The group also provides some funding for health programs for Afghan women, as well as some aid for Afghan refugees in Pakistan.

So far, the schools and health programs are continuing, and AJWS plans to continue its funding, Messinger said.

But as more and more Afghans and aid workers flee the country, the programs' future is uncertain. And the AJWS is expecting heightened request for aid from the refugees it helps in Pakistan. Schools in the most jeopardy right now are those in and near Kabul, which is likely to be targeted by U.S. bombing, said Catherine Shimony, the AJWS' director of international programs.

Already, an Afghan woman who lives in Pakistan near the refugee camps and usually travels several times a year to the United States to give updates about the schools had to cancel a planned visit to New York.

In the past, the group has not been shy about advocating on other issues that affect beneficiaries. Last year, it persuaded several other Jewish organizations to lobby for debt relief for developing nations.

As the situation heats up, the AJWS is not sure whether to take a specific position on how the United States should react to the attacks, or simply keep trying to support the schools, Messinger said.

However, she said, she will continue to urge Americans to step up grassroots, anti-poverty assistance to troubled countries as a way of "improving our international position."

"It's always better to wage peace than to wage war," she said. □

Poll: Israel should keep low profile

NEW YORK (JTA) — More than 75 percent of Americans feel Israel should adopt a low profile and reach out to the Palestinians if this could help the United States gain support from Arab and Muslim groups for its coalition against terrorism, according to a new poll.

The Harris Poll found 40 percent believe such a stance is "very important," and another 37 percent say it is "somewhat important." □

FOCUS ON ISSUES**Sixty years after Babi Yar, focus has turned to killings***By Peter Ephross*

NEW YORK (JTA) — The word “Auschwitz” brings a recognizable chill to the spine.

Adults and children in much of the world are taught about the gas chambers that symbolize the worst of the Holocaust — and of human horrors.

But for many, the term “Babi Yar” — where more than 33,000 Jews were slaughtered on the outskirts of Kiev, Ukraine, in September 1941 — fails to evoke the same recognition or shivers.

Indeed, for many Jews and non-Jews alike, the Babi Yar killings — whose 60th anniversary was marked Sunday with the laying of a cornerstone for a Jewish heritage center sponsored by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee — and other non-concentration camp massacres are but a footnote to history, if they're known at all.

“For the general population, the image is the image of Auschwitz and the other killing centers that the Nazis set up,” says Paul Shapiro, director of the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial in Washington.

Of course, part of the reason for the dominant role that death camps play in Holocaust consciousness is the fact that no other genocide so ruthlessly constructed machinery for the sole purpose of killing.

“There have been many massacres, but constructing gas chambers — industrialized massacres — is what gives the Holocaust its uniqueness,” says Christopher Browning, author of “Ordinary Men,” a book examining the German killing forces that participated in the massacres.

But there are other reasons wartime massacres and ghetto roundups — in which as many as 2.1 million Jews were killed out of a total 6 million — have failed to sear our consciousness.

Among them is geography.

Most Jews killed in Holocaust massacres died in ghetto liquidations and other mass murders in Poland, Romania and areas of the former Soviet Union, where concentrations of Jews were larger and military campaigns generally longer.

Archives in these countries, part of the former Soviet bloc, were generally restricted until the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Travel to many cities where massacres had taken place was difficult, if not illegal, and Soviet citizens had an understandable fear of talking to researchers.

And a majority of Holocaust survivors who later emigrated to the West came from countries in Western and Central Europe where Jews were more likely to have been sent to camps than shot.

As Holocaust consciousness in the West increased in the 1960s and 1970s, the experiences of these survivors became the basis of our knowledge about the survivors' collective experience.

Think of the Italian Jew Primo Levi, whose “Survival in Auschwitz,” describes daily life in the most notorious of the death camps. “Night,” a book by Elie Wiesel, focuses on camp life in Birkenau, Auschwitz and Buchenwald. Even Anne Frank was eventually deported to Bergen-Belsen, where she died in 1945.

Photos from the camps — of trains full of Jews rolling in, inmates in striped pajamas, the Arbeit Macht Frei signs that hung above some camps — have created Holocaust images in the minds

of millions. “Visually, our image of the Holocaust is of a gaunt survivor being liberated from the concentration camp,” says Browning, who teaches at the University of North Carolina.

Tourism has sharpened the primacy of this concentration camp imagery. Auschwitz, Treblinka and other camps have memorials or museums where travelers can contemplate the Nazi-era horrors.

Often-unmarked massacre sites or unkempt graveyards don't possess the same evocative power. That same power draws scholars to focus on concentration camps.

In a certain sense, it's both more horrific — and simpler — to describe the Holocaust in death camps, where a routinized form of pure evil prevailed. In camps, says Rebecca Golbert, a scholar who specializes in the Holocaust in Ukraine, “there's a clear system and a machine that people can describe. It's a lot more messy to talk about mass killings.”

In Kiev, as in most cases, the Nazis issued orders that Jews should report to a centralized location at a certain time. In some cases, they rounded up local Jews before killing them — usually with the help of local collaborators.

The result is that some of those who survived the Holocaust without spending time in a camp believe their stories have been left out of history, says Browning, who is currently working on a book about life in a slave labor camp in Poland.

“There are many survivors who expressed gratitude to me that their story and their experience has been told — that not having a tattoo on their arm and not having been in a camp wasn't recognized as part of the master narrative of the Holocaust,” Browning says.

In addition, there weren't communities of survivors left from these places. In the past few years, however, the history of massacres and killings that took place outside of camps has begun to make headlines.

Books such as Browning's and, in particular, Daniel Jonah Goldhagen's “Hitler's Willing Executioners,” shed more light on the German perpetrators of these killings.

And the revelation that Poles participated in at least one of these massacres helped put the Jedwabne atrocities firmly on the Holocaust map.

It had long been known that 1,600 Jews were killed in the village of Jedwabne, Poland, in July 1941.

A small monument on the site had attributed the slaughter to German Nazis and the Gestapo. But in a book published in March, Polish American scholar Jan Gross revealed that local Poles had herded their neighboring Jews into a barn and set it afire.

In July, Polish President Alexander Kwasniewski apologized for the massacre at an official ceremony.

The path of Holocaust history — first covering the horrors of Auschwitz before focusing on the smaller events of massacres — mirrors the way history is generally written, Browning says.

Current Holocaust scholarship is focusing on those involved in the shootings.

“When you see the individual,” whether it's the perpetrator or the victim, a bystander or one who intervened, “you understand the individual, because that individual is you or me,” the Holocaust museum's Shapiro says.

It's not just scholars who are recording history.

Jewish students in Odessa, Ukraine, participated in a project last year identifying massacre sites. In other communities, local residents, often non-Jews, are attempting to clean up cemeteries and erect plaques and monuments. □